

THE PROBUS CLUB OF CHRISTCHURCH (FOUNDED 1977)



NEWSLETTER December 2017 40th Year of Christchurch Probuss

Presidential Ramblings!!

Where did the year go? - you may well ask! – it seems to me that time goes faster as one gets older, and already we are heading towards the festive period.

There have been many highlights during our 40th year, not least the special anniversary lunch at Careys Manor and then the anniversary quiz at the prestigious Masonic Centre in Christchurch – both extremely enjoyable events.

A few days before writing this article, I happened to meet Nick Geary, the Mayor of Christchurch who attended the lunch – he recalled what a very pleasant occasion it had been and what a friendly club he had found us to be – long may that continue.

But of course none of this would have been possible without a great deal of organisation, and I would like to express my sincere thanks to all committee members for the excellent support that they have provided. Apart from the two events mentioned, we have heard from some most interesting speakers, and enjoyed a variety of social events.

In last year's December newsletter Graham Newton expressed the wish for our membership to top fifty by the time that I took over from him as President. Well, we never quite made it – and we still haven't! – but please do encourage any retired friends to come along – the free lunch that we provide for potential new members remains on offer.

May joins me in wishing you all a most enjoyable Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

Robin Haggett
President

40th Anniversary Lunch

On 21st June at Careys Manor Hotel, Brockenhurst, Members and their wives celebrated the 40th Anniversary of our Club with an excellent lunch. President Robin presented our official guest, the Mayor of Christchurch, with a book on the Club's history and a cheque for £100 towards the Mayor's charities.

After lunch we were superbly entertained by Avril Owton MBE, with a talk titled "from Tiller Girl to Hotel Owner". Avril, who has run the Cloud Hotel, Brockenhurst for 41 years, regaled us with stories of her dancing years through to the trials and tribulations of owning and running an hotel. The adage, "the show must go on" applicable in both her careers.

40th Anniversary Quiz Night

President Robin decided he would like a Quiz Night as part of our Clubs 40th Anniversary, and this was duly held at the Christchurch Masonic Centre on 27th September. Teams such as Bandits, Wandering Minds, Damp Behind the Ears and The Four Brain Cells, etc enjoyed a great evening with Quiz-master Robin asking some very fiendish questions. Most of the questions related to our founding year of 1977 and one question in particular resulted in the whole room singing Elvis Presley's Return to Sender!

A most enjoyable night was had by everyone and finished off with fish and chips. The winning team was Speakers Corner, made up of Terry Reed, Patsy Taylor, Les Denmead and Diane Hemsley.

Recent Speakers

We have once again been greatly entertained at the monthly meetings by some very interesting talks.

In April **Kathy McNally** spoke on "Spying - The Great Game" and informed us that Kim Philby aptly said that "to betray you must first belong". Kathy then took us on a very interesting meander back through time in what must be one of the world's oldest professions. Knowledge is power, the more so if it relates to your enemies or potential enemies.

We once again welcomed **Steve Roberts** as our speaker in May and his subject this time was the Blue Plaques in Bournemouth.

In June **Alan Jones**, speaking on hypnotherapy, told us that one of the three things hypnosis required in the individual was the intelligence of at least a five-year-old!

Our July speaker was a late cancellation, so we did what anyone would do if in trouble, we called a policeman. In our case, an ex-policeman - **Ken Heap**, who was "persuaded" to give us part two of his talk "My life in Crime", and what a very interesting career he has had in the police and allied intelligence work.

He gave a brief recount of his police work, from tackling armed criminals to investigation for any possible terrorist involvement in the Kegworth air disaster.

David Shead gave a very interesting talk entitled Little Known Battle of Britain stories in August. David, speaking with no notes, had a wealth of knowledge about the battle and was able to give some depth to the aspects which most of us had only a passing idea about.

Nick Hawkin, returned by popular demand in September, his subject this time was "The enduring Mystery of the Mary Celeste". Much has been written and debated about this mysterious ship, which was found intact but with no one on board in 1872, half way between the Azores and Gibraltar. Nick entertainingly went through the 7 popular theories of the time as to what happened, from alcohol induced mutiny to possible insurance fraud gone wrong.

Jon Symonds gave a most interesting talk in October on The Wireless in Wartime. The mere fact we all knew what a wireless was speaks volumes for our ages.

Reminder of the Attendance Rules

Members unable to attend any of the following meetings must inform the Dining Secretary (Colin Dobson – Telephone 01425-271953 or e-mail colin@goblins.plus.com) **at the latest by the Friday preceding the meeting.** Additionally, if any member has dietary problems with the meal specified, please speak to Colin (again, by the preceding Friday) about a possible alternative being provided. An alternative vegetarian option will be available at every meeting.

All main courses are served with Fresh Seasonal Vegetables.



Cooperisms: Now here's a quick laugh. Do this tomorrow. Go into an antique shop and say "What's new?"

Future Speakers and Menus

5th December – Cliff Beard – Traffic: A Forensic Collision Investigation

Roast Lamb, Sauteed Potatoes, Rosemary Jus and Mixed Vegetables (Spinach & Goats Cheese Tart, Roasted New Potatoes)
Apple & Blackberry Crumble, Clotted Cream

2nd January – Dorset Police – Be Cyber Safe
Pork & Leek Sausages, Herb Mash Potato, Onion Jus (Quorn & Butternut Squash Lasagne)
Spotted Dick, Crème Anglaise

6nd February – Marc Pacey (son of our New Zealand guests and correspondents) – The recovery of the "Highball", the lesser known Barnes Wallace Bouncing Bomb

Chicken and Leek Casserole, New Potatoes (Wild Mushroom Risotto, Rocket and Truffle Oil)
Baked White Chocolate Cheesecake, Raspberry Compote

6th March – AGM – Terry Reed (member) – My Life and Times

Chicken Wrapped in Parma Ham, Dauphinoise Potato, Tarragon Cream Sauce (Asparagus and Spinach Linguini, Sun Blushed Tomato Pesto)
Wild Berry Pavlova, Chantilly Cream

3rd April – John Symonds – The Golden Age of Radio

Poached Smoked Haddock, Crushed Potato, Chive Veloute (Mushroom Stroganoff, Braised Rice)
Apple Crumble, Crème Anglaise

Membership

We have been very pleased to welcome three new members since our last Newsletter was issued:

Paul Martin

Wife: Brenda

Joined June 2017

Bank Manager

Hobbies: Family, Photography, Model Railway, Rotary, Keeping out of Trouble!

Terry Reed

Joined June 2017

Retirement Home Proprietor

Hobbies: Travel, Photography, DIY

Edwin Best

Wife: Mary

Joined December 2017

RAF Flight Lt.

Hobbies: Bridge, Badminton

A very warm welcome to all.

While we promote our Club through Posters, local Newspapers and Magazines, the most successful method in recruiting new members comes from existing members introducing friends, neighbours and other acquaintances. If anybody you know shows an interest please bring them along to check us out – and enjoy their free lunch!

Obituary

It is with great regret that we record the recent passing of three of our Members.

Les Newey (member since June 1999)

Wife Audrey (an associate member)

Funeral was a private affair.

Tony Garland (member since December 2010)

Wife Dawn

Funeral was at St James, Pokesdown and was well attended by members of the club.

Norman Fensome (member since July 2014)

Wife Aprille

Funeral was at the Mary Magdalene Church, New Milton, followed by committal at Hinton Park Woodland Burial Ground.

Website

Our Clubs website address is:

www.probuschristchurch.org.uk

Please do take the opportunity to visit the site and give us your views.

For Your Diary:

- a) **Christmas Lunch** at the South Lawn Hotel
Thursday 14th December
Full details have been distributed and are on the website
- b) **Coffee Morning** (January)
Date and venue to be decided
- c) **President's Lunch**
Dudsbury Golf Club
Friday 2nd March
Full details to be distributed

Ladies Group

Rosemary Warren has been organising a group of our ladies, who meet informally – for lunch on the 2nd Wednesday monthly, and for coffee at the Lord Bute Hotel, Highcliffe on the 4th Wednesday monthly.

Dates for **January** are:

10th – Lunch, Bistro on the Beach, Southbourne
12.15 for 12.30pm

24th – Coffee at the Lord Bute, Lymington Road

Any ladies who have not so far attended will be made very welcome – please contact **Rosemary Warren** for further details.

Cooperisms



My wife was in a beauty shop for two hours, and that was just for the estimate!

If you've got insomnia, don't worry, and definitely don't lose any sleep over it!

President's Weekend Away

A great weekend away on the Isle of Wight was thoroughly enjoyed by members and their wives. Friday night we had "The Graduates" playing sixties music along with other songs thrown in on the night, all enjoyed by everyone in the hotel.

Saturday night "The Total Who Show" went down like a lead balloon! Everyone retired to the Solent Lounge where we were entertained by Country Joe.

Sunday night we had "The Sound of Musicals" which was quite entertaining; afterwards we danced the last night to the sounds of Hannah Robinson in the Solent Lounge. During the day everyone went their own way visiting some of the IOW attractions including The Needles, Godshill, Shanklin, The Donkey Sanctuary, Osborne House, Carisbrooke Castle, The Garlic Centre, Cowes, Ryde and more.

Two major events were held over the weekend, The Literary Festival and the Buses and Beer Festival which were also attended by some members.

The rooms, food and of course the company were excellent. An Orange Sun to finish off our weekend. Already looking forward to next year's President's Weekend Away.

The Welfare of Us All

As the current Club Welfare Officer (it is the customary role for the Immediate Past President) I have become increasingly aware of gaps in our mutual care for each other.

As long as we are able to drive, attendance at meetings and sharing in the social life of the club are easy, but what about when our sight or reaction times start to desert us and we are no longer able to drive? With the changes in life expectation happening to us this phase of life is becoming longer. Some of us have friendships within the club that make car sharing easy but that is not true for all. At the moment we do not need anything as formal as a rota of drivers but we do need a system to enable lift offering to happen easily. My suggestion is that the co-ordination of lift provision should be one of the roles of the Welfare Officer who could receive requests for a lift and find a provider – either on a one-off arrangement or on a regular basis. So, if you are not able to drive to a meeting on a temporary basis or you have to give up

driving permanently, please contact me or my successor after the AGM in March. Additionally, if you get a phone call or email from me asking you to bring someone to a meeting please don't be surprised – or react ungenerously.

In similar vein, I am also concerned that, when members become housebound or are laid up by illness or during convalescence, members can feel cut off from the club. So if that happens to you, please get in touch with me and I will visit you if I can and/or ask a member living near to you to visit. As in the car lift scenario, please members, if I ask you don't be surprised – or react ungenerously.

Frailty or disability are frustrating and morale-breaking but, at least in our Club, let's make sure they are not isolating and reasons to leave the Club.

Graham Newton
Welfare Officer.

The Good Old Days?

When I was a boy my Mum used to send me down to the corner shop with two shillings and I'd come back with a bag of potatoes, two loaves, two pints of milk, a block of cheese, a packet of tea and half a dozen eggs. Can't do that now . . . too many security cameras!



A Christmas Limerick

*It's the time of the year reindeer dread
Pulling hard on that big, heavy sled.
Just once they all pine
FedEx 'em this time
And let us spend Christmas in bed.*

**A VERY HAPPY
CHRISTMAS TO ALL CLUB
MEMBERS AND THEIR
FAMILIES**